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# HOBBIES THAT PLEASE MEN OF AFFAIRS

## Astonishing Variety of Delightful Occupations Followed

**H**OBBIES of prominent Washington officials, described in detail recently in *The New York Herald Magazine*, stirred such interest that the general topic has been pursued a bit further. Here-with is presented a series of thumbnail sketches of the fads and fancies of men in all walks in life widely enough known to be classed as leaders. To one who has not given the matter much thought, the variety of vocations for pleasure must be astounding.

One of the features of the accompanying article is the description of the Hobby Club, a New York organization that has on its rolls many prominent men and which gives each member a chance to ride his hobby for the edification of his fellow members.

By WILLIS STEELL.

**G**ET a hobby, elder brother, and ride it for your life. Become a collector of something homogeneous, whether it be cancelled postage stamps, first editions, first proofs, buttons from all over the world, poetic scraps from the back page of *THE SUN*, anything! Only you must be as serious about it as the four-year-old boy who rides a kitchen chair firmly believing that its hoofs strike fire, its nostrils breathe smoke and its tail switches like an angry cat's. Mount your hobby, elder brother, realizing that if it doesn't devour distance it will eat up ennui.

A new America has been discovered whose existence was not suspected in the '80s and '90s of the last century—an America of hobby riding. The world in this respect has grown wiser as it grew older, and men who once would have gone daily to their office after they felt a little weak in the hams, after the light that shines on circumstance and makes it important had faded; who would have kept looking with lack lustre eyes on business as it is conducted (all wrong!) by younger men, now retire and devote their leisure to a hobby. Happy to give all their time to the kitchen chair, which formerly they could ride on Sundays and occasionally after business hours.

Sports, and especially golf, are barred from the list of popular hobbies. The man of 60 who takes up the clubs doubtless gets some of the benefits of hobby riding. The modern Isaac Walton is born, not made; he begins with a bent pin and a piece of twine; he ends with reel and fly. The sport is a part of him, as hunger is, and he chokes neither.

A real hobby demands choice, thoughtful, prayerful choice. It is not a thing to be lightly assumed and as lightly discarded. The man who thinks it so deserves and gets one of two things—a violent fall at the very start or a half hearted interest which never grows into illusion.

The founder of a great publishing house of New York who arose and flourished in that nineteenth century supposed, mistakenly, to be a hobbyist, kept a room adjoining his library always locked. The family called it his Bluebeard chamber, but he never left with any of them the little key. When he died and the room was opened it was found to be stacked to the ceiling with theatre programmes—programmes not of entertainments held in New York or this country alone but in every city of the world. To collect this trove must have taken time, patience and money, and yet the collector went to the theatre only once or twice in a season.

Why did the great publisher choose this hobby when to collect any other kind of printed matter—say first editions—would have been much easier for him? The answer to this question is that nobody selects a hobby because it is easy. Quite the contrary, as some of the following instances show:

**C**HARLES M. SCHWAB, noted steel man and famous internationally for his keenness in all things commercial, takes his greatest pleasure in the almost childlike pastime of assembling chessmen. Sets of all sorts of material, each with an interesting bit of history, have been gathered by him. Many are valued in the thousands, some merely in scant dollars. But each set gives joy to its possessor and furnishes anecdotes galore for those fortunate enough to be shown them by the owner.

Much of Mr. Schwab's wonderful patience and diplomacy have been devoted to acquiring chess sets that were family heirlooms and others that formed the basis of ancestral worship by their owners. One of the strange features of this hobby of the steel master is the fact that he does not play chess for diversion at all, but is an ardent devotee of whist.

**M**ORGAN of three generations have had yachting as their hobby, and in each instance the Morgan has been a skilled sailorman. The elder J. P. Morgan, with his string of Corsair craft, was one of the famous Commodores of the

Rare Books Seemingly Rank First With Collectors, Coins and Stamps Getting Some Attention, and Almost Every Article of Vertu Having Its Devotees—Sports Have Keen Followers Among Business Men, Though One Man Prefers Cooking Above Everything Else, Much to the Delight of His Friends—Marvellous Success of the Hobby Club of New York Shows Hold of Fads and Fancies



New York Yacht Club—one that knew each last detail of yachting etiquette and followed the written and unwritten rules of the great sport as zealously as the old time naval officer followed the traditions of the service.

The present J. P. Morgan not only sails his own yacht—a frequent winner in her special class—but he watches the college boat races with keener interest than many a sophomore. The Harvard-Yale contest is never missed, and Junius Spencer Morgan is equally enthusiastic in both branches of aquatic sport. The tanned faces of father and son bespeak their indulgence in the chosen diversions.

**B**ERNARD M. BARUCH, hardheaded Wall Street operator, famous dollar a year man of the Wilson Administration, finds his most refreshing recreation in the collection of romantic fiction. It would seem to be impossible for him to read all the works of romance he has gathered and still take care of his diversified business and political interests—yet those close to him say that each volume gets far more than a passing glance.

It seems odd that another great Wall Street man (but of an earlier day) should have had the same fancy. But it is well known that the late William C. Whitney had a standing order for every novel printed in English to be delivered to him as soon as published. Great numbers filled his country homes at Westbury and Alken, and many others littered great tables in the Fifth Avenue home at Fifty-seventh street, now turned to business.

**A**LVIN W. KRECH, president of the Equitable Trust Company, is a prominent member of the Hobby Club of New York, a society remarkable for its exclusiveness. Of it more anon. It is sufficient to say here that to become a member the first requisite is that one has a hobby.

Mr. Krech's is books. He wants first editions of the works of authors who need not be quite as famous as Shakespeare, but the examples must be rarities. A first edition of "David Harum," modern as is the date of that entertaining book,

is strangely enough, one of these rarities. Mr. Krech possesses it and also copies of all subsequent editions.

He is but one of a regiment of men scattered over the world who peruse catalogues of great sales to be held in the capitals for the dispersion of famous libraries. They are hopelessly waiting for such an event to happen in the Morgan library, rich in incunabula and rare ancient books. There are interned in a vaulted chamber, like a giant safe, manuscripts of Byron, Dickens, Browning, Tennyson and many others of the mighty dead, slowly but surely yellowing with age.

Envious as collectors are of these MSS, they are more desirous of getting a chance to bid on the books that the beautiful rival of Catherine de Medici had bound for herself, Diane de Poitiers, with her two powers tooled in by hand in the rich, vented leather. These are the pride of Morgan collection.

**A**LBERT GALLATIN, inheritor of a fortune and a name famous in American annals, himself an artist, has a hobby of collecting representative bits of the work of contemporary painters and sculptors. His studio on West Fifty-fifth street offers a better history of modern art than many of the great museums who receive specimens of it grudgingly.

But Mr. Gallatin's hobby is not a selfish one limited to his own aestheticism, for he frequently donates to a public museum or gallery the work of a modern artist unrepresented there. His attitude in this is not imitated by hobby riders in general, who are apt to be miserly during life with their own particular trove. After they are dead the public may be gratified. Their heirs frequently take care of that.

**A**RCHER M. HUNTINGTON'S hobby is like a mountain; it cannot be hidden. Bold as an Alp, it stands a splendid museum of Spanish art and literature on upper Broadway, where it attracts more visitors than its neighbor, Trinity Burial Ground. Constantly he is spending immense sums to speed his hobby to the top notch of use and value. He sends emissaries to all parts of the globe that have once been explored by Spanish

adventurers, to South America, to West Africa. The ancient city of Goa, in a forgotten part of the world, is now being searched by Mr. Huntington's agents for ancient manuscripts that he believes will throw new light on the first Spanish and Portuguese voyagers who rounded the Cape and watered and refitted there.

They tell an amusing story of Mr. Huntington, one phase of whose hobby is to keep himself aloof from the daily incidents of the museum. He goes there every day and lingers all day buried in a distant room, a sanctum no one is permitted to invade. But one day as he entered the building he passed a group of little girls making an intellectual survey of it, under their teacher's instruction.

Contrary to his custom, Mr. Huntington yielded to his natural interest and went about, pointing out to the children the objects, books and pictures likeliest to amuse them. As he led them to the door, their visit finished, he said:

"I am glad to notice that you little girls have been taking notes; it will help you to remember what you have seen to-day. Now (leaning down and taking a pad out of one little girl's hand), now, let us see what this little girl has written."

"This little girl's pad was virgin of writing except for these words:

"My! what a big man!"

As Mr. Huntington is several inches above six feet in height the child's comment seemed justified.

**W**HAT August Belmont's hobby is everybody knows, horsemen have known it many years before Belmont Park, a racing track with all the modern trimmings, came into being; his brother Perry turned his mind in a different direction. He wished to be known as an orator, and as this desire has been

hard to thwart since Demosthenes's day, he probably wishes it still.

**W**ROCKHILL POTTS hobbyizes on the subject of Manhattan's history and possesses some rare pamphlets and a complete set of *Valentine's Manual*; Henry A. Schenck, president of the Bowery Savings Bank, has devoted a good deal of time and energy to making the employees of that bank a comfortable lot of men. Owing to his personal attention, the luncheon served to them in the building has not its like anywhere in the city where there is a similar feature.

**D**ANIEL GUGGENHEIM'S hobby is even more singular; he likes to cook or at least prepare with his own hands succulent dishes. Mr. Guggenheim's friends say that he has no rival when it comes to preparing a complicated but delicious salad.

**F.** LOREE, president of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, will tell you that he has three hobbies, his wife and a daughter and a son, but on his place in the Oranges what is to be heard will augment this hobbyizing by some rare specimens of feathered life. Chess is the hobby of his friend and fellow president William H. Truesdale.

**T**HE hobby of Charles H. Sabin, president of the Guaranty Trust Company, has changed with his years. In his young manhood he was a baseball player, and pretty good at the sport; later he took up polo, but for three or four years he has done nothing in that way. Now he ranks among the enthusiastic golf players, who are legion. A hobby unconnected with sport is the Boys Club, at Avenue A and Tenth street, of which Mr. Sabin is a trustee.

**W**HITNEY WARREN collects all sorts of beautiful things of the Renaissance period of art in sculpture, painting and in the way of pure decoration. He is a collector of paintings also, but chiefly of the modern school, and when he makes a notable assemblage of these he does not house them in some gallery of an unfrequented house, but strews them tastefully in the embellishment of a

great public building, such as a hotel, where they can be seen by the many. One such collection used for this purpose Mr. Warren made of the exquisite etchings of the French artist Paul Helleu. This collection was made quite recently.

**P.** A. S. FRANKLIN of the international Marine has arrived at middle age without losing his fondness for fishing. When the bluefish begin to run in the channel down around Babylon Mr. Franklin is one of the first on the ground, on his own or a chartered vessel. Trubee Davison, son of Henry Pomeroy Davison, is by hobby an aviator and flies his own machine. Rodman E. Griscom likes flying also.

**C**LARENCE M. WOOLLEY, included among the geniuses of finance whom Mr. Wilson summoned to Washington to serve on a board during the war, has a hobby for old furniture that he carries so far as to fit up with refectory table and roughly carved benches like those used in monasteries in the Middle Ages the consulting or conference room of the officers of the extensive company of which he is president. Nothing has been heard in the way of complaint from these officers, although it may easily be imagined that they might prefer modern comfort to Moyen age realism. There may be method in the furnishing if it makes the conferences shorter.

**W**EVERILL HARRIMAN'S hobby is described "on the Street" as "making money like his father." E. H. Harriman really had one—it was the Boys Club, of which he was the founder. His son is one of the trustees.

It is rare to see young Mr. Harriman anywhere after dark unless he happens to be taking a simple constitutional around Washington Square, where he lives. He owns a yacht, and it may be presumed that he uses it sometimes, but there is very little heard of the vessel's movements about the harbor and Sound, just as there is hardly anything ever said except on business topics about her owner.

**J**EFFERSON M. LEVY'S hobby used to be Monticello, the Virginia estate once owned by President Jefferson, but as he has admitted his willingness to sell this property, a secondary hobby, long delightfully pursued, may have taken precedence. This is to hunt up and dine at his club young authors who have taken the first step along the hard and intricate pathway to fame. As young authors are impecunious as a class, such a hobby has its good points.

**J**UDGE ELBERT H. GARY'S proclivity to have the best domestic servants available will interest women everywhere. At one time the development of Gary, Indiana, as an experimental frontier of a new system of education ran this fad hard, but the former is long lived. If it seems to be a small matter, and one peculiarly personal, that is because it has not been given a thought nor have the difficulties been properly weighed.

England was combed for the right housekeeper; France for the right cook, and one has but to look at the faultless demeanor of the men employed on the Gary car to appreciate that they did not arrive there until after a long process of weeding out. Other servants may loiter about when in waiting in front of a shop or in the line at the opera, but not the Gary servants. Something to be noted is that these perfect attendants are proud to be attached to the Gary menage; they do not object to the Judge's discipline.

**P**ROF. WILLIAM P. TRENT has chosen for his avocation hunting up all sorts of books, "news letter" references, etc., about that mystifying author and pamphleteer, Daniel Defoe, famous for his "Robinson Crusoe."

**G**EORGE A. PLIMPTON'S hobby is old school books, readers, spelling books and antique arithmetics. He can tell you, and show you, the documents in the case, every kind of book that has been used in our schools from the "red schoolhouse" day to the present.

**D**R. GEORGE F. KUNZ, gem expert, has happily embodied business with pleasure in collecting books on precious gems from all over the world, and his pride runs high over the completeness of his collection.

**D**R. FREDERICK PETERSON, the well known neurologist, has a fad which developed from travel in China. He has brought home some very wonderful Chinese paintings and in collecting them he has not neglected to gather in all the available manuscripts written

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